Claims:

Please amend the claims as in the following listing:

1. (currently amended) A method of yield improvement for manufactured products, comprising:
A) providing an identification plan for parts, whereby each part is given unique and traceable identification data by assigning numbers to batches of parts and further assigning data related to positions within said batch of parts;
B) providing an identification plan for processing equipment by which each piece of equipment is given unique and traceable identification data;
C) providing a database into which said parts identification data and said processing equipment identification data are stored, and related;
D) processing said parts in at least one processing stage by said processing equipment to yield processed parts;
E) testing said processed parts for defects and performance characteristics;
F) identifying problems through said testing of said processed parts;
G) retrieving said related parts identification data and said processing equipment identification data from said database;
H) analyzing said data to trace said parts to said processing equipment and to determine what corrections and repairs to said processing equipment may be necessary;
I) making corrections and repairs to processing equipment to correct said problems; and
J) confirming improvement to yield of said manufactured products.

2. (cancelled)

3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein:
said database of C is accessible from multiple computer terminals.

4. (original) The method of claim 3, wherein:
said multiple computer terminals are located in separate facilities.

5. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein:
said multiple computer terminals are connected by the Internet.

6. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein:
said multiple computer terminals are connected by an intranet.

7. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein:
said processing equipment of B is located in more than one manufacturing facility.

8. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein:
said testing of said processed parts of E is done in a separate manufacturing facility from the one in which at least one of said at least one processing stage is performed.

9. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein:
said testing of said processed parts of E includes shipping finished manufactured products to consumers and monitoring field problems.

10. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein:
said identifying problems of said processed parts of F includes shipping finished manufactured products to consumers, monitoring field problems and inspecting returned products.

11. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein:
said identifying of problems of said processed parts of F includes tracing parts downstream to monitor performance of parts from a processing machine which is suspected of having problems.

12. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein:
said identifying of problems of said processed parts of F includes tracing parts upstream to correct performance of a processing machine which is suspected of causing problems.

13. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein:
said identifying of problems of F includes sending ahead parts from a main batch to test performance of the main batch.

14. (currently amended) A method of yield improvement for HDDs, comprising:
A) providing an identification plan for parts, whereby each part is given unique and traceable identification data by assigning numbers to disk batches and further assigning position data related to positions within said disk batches;
B) providing an identification plan for processing equipment by which each piece of equipment is given unique and traceable identification data;
C) providing a database into which said parts identification data and said processing equipment identification data are stored, and related;
D) receiving disk cassettes;
E) inputting disk identification data from disk batches and position data into said database;
F) processing said disks in at least one processing stage by said processing equipment to produce HDDs;
G) testing said HDDs for defects and performance characteristics;
H) identifying problems through said testing of said HDDs;
I) retrieving said related disk identification data and said processing equipment identification data from said database;
J) analyzing said data to trace said HDDs to said processing equipment to determine what corrections and repairs to said processing equipment may be necessary;
K) making corrections and repairs to processing equipment to correct said problems; and
L) confirming improvement to yield of said HDDs.

15. (original) The method of claim 14, wherein:
said database of C is accessible from multiple computer terminals.

16. (original) The method of claim 15, wherein:
said multiple computer terminals are located in separate facilities.

17. (original) The method of claim 16, wherein:
said multiple computer terminals are connected by the Internet.

18. (original) The method of claim 16, wherein:
said multiple computer terminals are connected by an intranet.

19. (original) The method of claim 14, wherein:
said processing equipment is located in more than one manufacturing facility.

20. (original) The method of claim 14, wherein:
said testing of said HDDs of G is done in a separate manufacturing facility from the one in which at least one of said at least one processing stage is performed.

21. (original) The method of claim 14, wherein:
said testing of said HDDs of G includes shipping finished manufactured products to consumers and monitoring field problems.

22. (original) The method of claim 14, wherein:
said identifying problems of said HDDs of H includes shipping finished manufactured products to consumers, monitoring field problems and inspecting returned products.

23. (original) The method of claim 14, wherein:
said identifying of problems of said HDDs of H includes tracing parts downstream to monitor performance of parts from a processing machine which is suspected of having problems.

24. (original) The method of claim 14, wherein:
said identifying of problems of said HDDs of H includes tracing parts upstream to correct performance of a processing machine which is suspected of causing problems.

25. (original) The method of claim 14, wherein:
said identifying of problems of said HDDs of H includes sending ahead parts from a main batch to test performance of the main batch.